

Appl. No. Unassigned

A4  
amended.


22. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the cells being propagated in the cultivation medium express a desired gene product or produce a desired product.

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the foregoing amendments to Claims 7, 8, 11, 12, 17 and 19-22 be entered in order to avoid this application from incurring a surcharge for the presence of one or more multiple dependent claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

  
Stephen A. Bent  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 29,768

FOLEY & LARDNER  
Washington Harbour  
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20007-5109  
Telephone: (202) 672-5404  
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

FOLEY & LARDNER

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

7. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 6] claim 1, wherein the cultivation medium in step (ii) does not substantially or entirely consist of whole milk, but at least partially of skimmed milk or cream.

8. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 7] claim 1, wherein the stock inoculum material and/or the subset of the stock inoculum material is in a state selected from the group consisting of a liquid, frozen and dried state.

11. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 10] claim 1, wherein the subset of the stock inoculum material in step (ii) is added under aseptical conditions or under substantially aseptical conditions to the cultivation medium.

12. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 11] claim 1, wherein the stock inoculum material is provided in sealed enclosures.

17. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 16] claim 1, wherein the starter culture organism in step (I) originates from a species selected from the group consisting of a lactic acid bacterial species, a *Bifidobacterium* species, a *Propionibacterium* species, a *Staphylococcus* species, a *Micrococcus* species, a *Bacillus* species, an *Enterobacteriaceae* species including *E. coli*, an *Actinomycetes* species, a *Corynebacterium* species, a *Brevibacterium* species, a *Pediococcus* species, a *Pseudomonas* species, a *Sphingomonas* species, a *Mycobacterium* species, a *Rhodococcus* species, a fungal species and a yeast species.

19. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 18] claim 1, wherein the stock inoculum material in step (I) comprises at least two starter culture strains.

20. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 19] claim 1, wherein the starter culture is selected from industries from the group consisting of the food, feed and pharmaceutical industry.

21. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 20] claim 1, wherein the starter culture is used for inoculation of milk which is further processed to obtain a dairy product, which is selected from the group consisting of cheese, [yoghurt] yogurt, butter, inoculated sweet milk and a liquid fermented milk product.

22. (Amended) A method according to [any of the claims of 1 to 21] claim 1, wherein the cells being propagated in the cultivation medium express a desired gene product or produce a desired product.

[illegible]